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ACTING INFORMATION HEAD NAMED AT USDA

Claude Gifford has been named by the new administration at USDA to serve as head of public information and public affairs activities.

He will serve as acting assistant secretary for governmental and public affairs until realignment of operations is completed and a permanent information head is named.

Gifford has been assistant public affairs director for publications and special programs, and previously served as director of communication for USDA.

Jim Webster, former USDA assistant secretary for governmental and public affairs, is now editing and publishing a new weekly, "Food and Fiber Letter."

MISSOURI AG COMMUNICATIONS MEETING SET

Writing readably will be a highlight of the 1981 agricultural communications conference hosted by agricultural editor's office at the University of Missouri.

The annual event is scheduled for April 1 and 2. It will be held on the Columbia campus, according to Dick Lee, Missouri agricultural editor.

Doug Mueller, president of the Gunning-Mueller Clear Writing Institute of Santa Barbara, Calif., will instruct the half-day clear writing session.

Mueller, a writing consultant to many of the country's large corporations, was a long-time associate of the late Robert Gunning who devised the "fog index" to measure level of writing difficulty.

Other planned program topics include providing market news for farmers, unreported farm stories, news, photography and communications creativity.

The conference is planned for persons communicating with farmers. Anyone interested in seeing a copy of the 1981 program should write to Dick Lee, 1-98 Agriculture, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO 65211.

1981 ACE CONFERENCE PLANS PROGRESSING

CURRENT SERIAL RECORDS

The ACE '81 national conference program committee is planning a variety of educational seminars--all designed to help members of the Agricultural Communicators in Education to become better communicators and update their skills.

The conference will be held July 12-15 at Mackinac Island, Michigan.

The new national administration and its agricultural policies in the '80s will be highlighted.

There also will be a session on challenges for ACE communicators in the coming decade, i.e., new audiences, new messages, and new communication channels.

Seminars being planned will include how computers can make your writing, editing or graphic design job easier; how to write features for magazines; what's new in graphic design and video; how to avoid "creative burnout"; how to become a better science writer; and how to be a better in-service trainer.

In addition, there will be special educational programs for students in agricultural communications.

Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow (ACT) also will hold its annual national conference concurrently with ACE on Mackinac Island.

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND MAKES CHANGE

Bob Rathbone, chairman of the information and publications department at the University of Maryland, retired recently.

He retired once before, as information director of USDA's Agricultural Research Service before joining the Maryland staff.

ARS is now part of USDA's Science and Education Administration.

Jack Owen, vice chairman of the I&P department since 1964, will serve as acting chairman until a permanent head is named.

Owen served as northeast regional director of ACE during 1968-70.

KSU NAMES TWO EXTENSION SPECIALISTS

Kansas State University has expanded its extension information programming in energy and engineering programs with the addition of two new extension information specialists.

Gary Vacin, KSU extension editor, reports that Susan Bacon and Rich Gardner have been added to the staff.

Bacon is the new assistant extension editor for energy programs. She has B.S. and M.S. journalism degrees from KSU. And she's had some temporary stints with KSU extension and agricultural experiment stations.

Gardner is the new extension specialist in graphic arts. He has a B.A. in art from KSU and a B.J. in photojournalism from the University of Missouri. He's had experience as a graphic designer and photographer in Kansas and Missouri.

AGENCY INFO CHIEF RETIRES

Former USDA Food and Nutrition Service information director Phil Fleming retired recently.

Fleming also served many years with the Agricultural Marketing Service--as northeast regional information director, branch chief in Washington, later deputy director and associate director of the information division--before becoming FNS information director in 1970.

FIRST AG LANDS CONFERENCE PLANNED

The first annual "National Agricultural Lands Conference" will be held in Chicago Feb. 8-10.

The event is co-sponsored by several organizations and foundations.

The National Association of State Departments of Agriculture, the Illinois Department of Agriculture, National Grange and National Association of Conservation Districts are just a few.

Former U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Bob Bergland will speak at the opening session. His topic will be the recently released national agricultural lands study report.

Newly appointed Secretary of Agriculture John Block will speak at the concluding luncheon.

MARYLAND CENTER SEEKING BROADCASTER

The Maryland Center for Public Broadcasting is seeking a person, preferably a woman, to do on-camera interviews for its "Up on the Farm" show.

This program is broadcast throughout the state of Maryland.

Anyone interested should contact Glen Tolbert at (301) 337-4161.

CONSERVATION PAYS OFF

A publication issued by USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service has won a prize from the Society for Technical Communication.

"Conservation from East to West" won an award of excellence in the annual report category from the international society of 6,000 government and industry professionals.

John Ryan of the ASCS information staff picked up the prize at a recent luncheon.

For copies of the publication, contact Frances Fuller of ASCS at Room 24-W, or P.O. Box 2415, Washington, DC 20013, or call 447-4122.

JUSTICE DEPT. ISSUES CONSUMER NEWSLETTER

The U.S. Department of Justice issued the first issue of its new monthly newsletter for consumers.

The four-page, three-column format, newsletter carries such articles as "New Guides to Small Claims Courts, FOIA," "Automobile Label Complaints Invited," "FBI Spanish Program Successful," and many others.

If you would like to get a copy of the "Justice Consumer Newsletter," write to Consumer Affairs Advisor, Department of Justice, Washington, DC 20530.

NACA PRESENTS "A GIFT OF HARVEST"

The National Agricultural Chemicals Association has a new film, "A Gift of Harvest," available for loan.

The 22-minute film shows how the modern farmer can fine-tune crop treatment--targeting in precisely on undesired pests that are doing the real damage.

The film (#Q526) may be borrowed from Association Films, Inc., 866 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10022.